

CONFRONTING THE RISING RISK OF WORLD WAR III

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First, the good news. According to this morning's papers, the FBI has concluded in a 29 page intelligence report that "based on information available to us, we do not believe the Soviets have achieved a dominant role in the U.S. Peace and Nuclear Freeze Movements, or that they directly control or manipulate the movement". That contradicts claims by President Ronald Reagan, who referred last year to people "some of whom want the weakening of America," intimating that Soviet agents essentially had inspired the Freeze Movement. He was challenged in that press conference as to his source for that information, and he said: "I can't tell you, that is classified and it is intelligence information". Apparently, the FBI was not able to find the Intelligence report he was referring to, and the White House revealed the next day that Reagan had based his statement on the Reader's Digest. Apparently, Reagan believes the Reader's Digest is classified. Or perhaps, he gets a classified edition! The FBI, while concluding that the Soviet influence was much less significant, concludes that Moscow has tried to infiltrate and penetrate the U.S. peace movement. Presumably, this comes from FBI informants within the peace movement. But the Movement is very broad. It is broad enough for both of those teams. They make the crowds larger.

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On the other hand, according to the Vancouver Sun of March 26, 1983, Prime Minister Trudeau is said to be "deeply disturbed" about loopholes in the outer space treaty that open the door to President Reagan's futuristic new "ballistic missile defence systems", which are supposed to shield the United States in future against Soviet missiles. "Even more disturbing" says the Sun's article, "is the fact that if the United States eventually deploys a new exotic anti-ballistic missile system, it could be used to stop a nuclear attack over Canadian territory". Do Canadians really find that disturbing? Coming from the United States, I find that rather reassuring. Would you prefer that the missiles continue on their course and hit California, rather than your relatively unpopulated areas? It seems rather a provincial attitude. I am sorry to hear it. As a good ally, I would think you would be happy to see those warheads diverted from their intended targets.

"Relatively unpopulated" is also the way the Pentagon has referred to Utah and Nevada, which were proposed as the site of the MX missile system under President Carter, when it had the race track form. That was to make it sound reassuring in Nevada, I guess. But there were many, many holes for the missiles, deceptive holes, so the Soviets would have to target all of those holes not knowing which the missile was in. "Shell game", they also called it. That would call for a great many Soviet warheads to be used for this purpose. Now, the Soviets could have that many warheads, as many as they could possibly need, especially if we do not ratify SALT II so they could build more warheads. But they would have to use many of them against Utah and Nevada, thus disarming themselves in the event of a war. As the Pentagon said, Utah and Nevada's specified role in this strategy was to serve as "a giant sponge" for Soviet missiles. The people in Utah and Nevada took a similarly provincial view of this function, just as come Canadians have a certain scepticism about using their territory as a fence that would capture the Soviet missiles on their way towards the United States.

The ABM plan doesn't necessarily call for blowing up the warheads over your territory, if it works. The plan is for high energy lasers, or charged particle beams, to intercept enemy missiles headed for the U.S. This is actually the latest progeny of Dr. Edward Teller, father of the H-bomb, who has described this plan as a "third generation" of nuclear weapons. (There is a funny kind of paternity competition at the University of California. Robert Oppenheimer was father of the A-bomb, Edward Teller of the H-bomb. Sam Cohen, an old colleague of mine at the RAND Corporation, worked at Livermore and likes to be known as the father of the neutron bomb. Teller now wants this

"third generation" of nuclear weapons. He wants to be a grandfather.)

Although atom bombs would be used, this might not, the way the Pentagon would define it, contradict the Outer Space Treaty about which Prime Minister Trudeau is concerned, because the bombs would not be used as bombs. They would be used to provide a surge of x-rays. Teller calls them an "x-ray pump." Orbiting A-bombs would explode, and the x-rays from the bombs would be channeled through lasing rods in space into x-ray lasers. These lasers would hit, over Canada or wherever, the oncoming thousands or tens of thousands of warheads, "cleaning the sky" in a Star Wars kind of effect.

Such reliance on technology to protect us from nuclear weapons is familiar to me from work that I did at RAND twenty years ago on the command and control of nuclear weapons, and the design of nuclear war plans. At the RAND Corporation, a "think tank" which in those days worked mainly for the U.S. Air Force, one of our jobs was to provide technical criticism of proposals that originated within the Air Force. These would be routed around RAND for different kinds of criticisms. I was in the Economics Department, but working on nuclear strategy.

I remember one proposal, made in 1959 or 1960, to save the United States from the effects of a possible Soviet surprise attack. There was great worry about the Soviet "missile gap." The idea was that by 1960 or 1961, the Soviets would have enough missiles to disarm us by knocking out all of our missiles in a first strike. Ostensibly, they would have had us at their mercy, one or two years hence. It was a tense time. We were presented with a proposal like Teller's for using technology to frustrate the enemy attack, rather than retaliate to it. This was called Project Turnaround, the brainchild of a colonel in the Air Force. It came to my desk having been reviewed by the Air Force, which had cleared it through and had sent it to RAND for our opinion.

The idea was to use the Atlas engine, then our largest ICBM (inter-continental ballistic missile) rocket engine. Ten thousand Atlas first-stage engines would be bolted firmly to the Earth in some relatively unpopulated area like Montana, in a rectangular array. When our "BMEWS", or Ballistic Missile Early Warning System, detected oncoming Soviet missiles (or what appeared to be oncoming Soviet missiles), these Atlas engines would be ignited simultaneously, briefly stopping or slowing the Earth's

rotation.' The missiles, coming from outer space on their inertial course into the atmosphere, would miss their intended targets - presumably Minuteman or Atlas missiles - and hit Cincinnati or Cleveland or Canada instead. Of course, there would be quite a bit of stuff flying around at that moment on the Earth's surface. But our Atlas or Minuteman missiles, safe in their silos, would still be available to retaliate on whatever remained of the Soviet Union....unless, of course, the Soviets had a similar system.

Later I recall discussing this with the various other people at RAND, who would pull out some scrap paper, make some calculations, and say, "Ten thousand isn't enough." But you could calculate what would be enough. I remember my first reaction to the proposal was, "Ho, ho! Good to see the Air Force has a sense of humour!" Then I looked at the routing slip on the side of this proposal and noticed that it had been initialled by a long list of Commands within the Air Force. It had gone through the whole bureaucratic process and had come to me. I looked at that piece of paper and thought to myself: "Could it be that I am in the wrong line of work?" It was the first time I remember asking myself that, though not the last.

I also asked myself: "Who are these guys? Are we really on the same team?" When you work for the government, you get thoughts like that. They come and go. The work goes on.

There is a limited perspective involved here, a narrow focus on "problem solving", a lack of sufficient attention, among other things, to preserving the ecosphere. That is what it comes down to. The question of whether there is an ABM system to intercept some of those incoming warheads over Canadian territory is not your major problem in Canada if a two-sided nuclear war occurs. Europeans have similar concern about the prospect that the United States might try to fight a "limited war" using Pershing missiles. They don't like the idea of being a lightning rod for Soviet attack. In fact, some Europeans actually may have entertained the idea Henry Kissinger once accused them of having, that is, a preference that the United States and Soviet Union fight a nuclear war over their heads, a war in which Europeans would somehow be exempt.

Editor's Note: A similar idea was the basis of Jules Verne's novel, The Purchase of the North Pole. Published in France in 1899 as Sans Dessus Dessous, the book described a harebrained scheme to change the Earth's axis by firing a huge cannon from the side of Mt. Kilimanjaro.

Although that is obviously a caricature without relevance to most people in the anti-war movement or to most Europeans, there are some who have had such thoughts. For example, some people in the European peace movement have thought that if they could remove all nuclear weapon sites from their own territory, and specifically keep Pershing and cruise missiles out, they would be relatively safe in a nuclear war. That is wrong. It would be wrong for Canada as well.

First of all, given the 20,000 Soviet nuclear warheads and the 30,000 U.S. ones, one can figure out how many of those are targeted on nuclear weapons. There are 1,400 Soviet hardened silos, 1,000 U.S. silos, plus submarine ports, and a few other similar targets. That amounts to 3,000 - 4,000 targets. It has been revealed that the United States target list includes 40,000 targets. The Russian target list can be assumed to be similar. The great majority even of the military targets do not happen to be nuclear weapon sites. Airfields capable of jet operation are a good example. The island of Grenada is currently providing itself with an airstrip that makes it a nuclear target. It is a jet airport, and jet airports are nuclear targets. Any jet airstrip can handle jet bombers and Europe is filled with jet airports, as is Canada. There are many other examples.

There is no way to opt out of an all-out nuclear exchange between the U.S. and the Soviet Union. The only exception, to some degree, is to move to the Southern Hemisphere. Prevailing winds would retain most fallout from a nuclear war within the hemisphere in which it originated, that is, the Northern Hemisphere. Within this hemisphere, one's chance of preserving oneself is highly problematic and difficult to plan for. Edward Teller has drawn on this distinction for twenty years, rejecting the notion that nuclear war threatens all life on earth. He says it would not destroy all life on earth. In fact, he says it could not destroy all life on earth. That is an unscientific statement. Experts agree that the range of uncertainties is such that the annihilation of life on earth, not just humanity, is a possibility. It is not the most likely outcome, one cannot say exactly how it would happen, but an all-out nuclear war might end life.

The explosion of nuclear warheads at higher atmospheric levels would threaten the ozone layer and greatly increase the amount of ultraviolet radiation at the Earth's surface. That could be an effect of the anti-ballistic missile system if it exploded nuclear warheads high in the atmosphere. The effect would not be only on Canada, if it did happen over Canada. It would affect the

entire globe to some extent, but especially the Northern Hemisphere.

Teller's strong emphasizes on the unlikelihood that all life could be destroyed used to puzzle me. Why is that point so significant to him? I believe the answer is that he sees the potential to destroy all life on Earth by our own weapons as a moral problem. Once he could put that fear to rest, there were no moral problems left. There were just the matters of price and efficacy. By the ballistic missile defence system that he is pushing right now, Teller proposes to lower the price on U.S. initiating nuclear war, thus making the threat of doing this more credible. Thus, in international crisis, he thinks we can avoid being challenged by the Soviet Union or one of its allies. If the threat fails, and has to be carried out...not everyone in the world dies. He is probably right about that, though not certainly.

You may be asking yourself what I asked myself when I considered Project Turnaround: "Who are these guys? Why are they pushing these schemes?" I did work among them, or people very like them, and I know a good deal of how they think. They do not want a nuclear war. I do not believe that President Reagan or Vice-President Bush, or T.K. Jones or anyone else wants a nuclear war, certainly not a large two-sided nuclear war. But they do want to threaten a nuclear war, in a wide variety of circumstances.

The U.S. has done just that on a dozen or more occasions since 1945, since Hiroshima. Presidents, usually in secret (from the U.S. public, though not from their opponents), have threatened to use nuclear weapons on opponents. Often these threats were explicit. In other cases, our Armed Forces were deployed in such a way as to convey a tacit warning to our opponent that we were prepared imminently to use nuclear weapons. This happened in Korea, in Indochina a number of times, in the Taiwan Straits, in the Berlin crisis of 1961 and during the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962. It is happening right now, in a more general way, in the Middle East. Both Presidents Carter and Reagan threatened the Soviet Union that if it moved into the Middle East beyond Afghanistan (for example, into Iran), it would "be risking World War III". Those are the words of Carter's Secretary of Defense Harold Brown in his last interview in office, and President Reagan repeated them in the Oval Office a month later.

"World War III" started by whom? On the borders of the Soviet Union near Iran, the Soviets would outnumber the maximum U.S. forces that could be brought there by some 20:1. This is not because they have a draft but because it is on their border. Similarly, the Soviets could not use

their large non-nuclear army to keep us from the oil of missile. Rather, their ICBM SS-18's and SS-19's have a new guidance system, retrofitted in 1982, which we think has an accuracy of about 200 yards. That is, about 50% of their warheads would land within 200 yards of their targets. That is the same accuracy installed by the U.S. five years earlier, on Minuteman III with the Mark 12A warhead and NS-20 guidance system. So the U.S. was the first to put in warheads that had the capability of landing close enough to a hardened silo to destroy it, six thousand miles away. We've led the way in developing "silo-busting" warheads, the key component of first-strike-capable nuclear forces.

What Presidents Carter and Reagan were telling those who listened was implicit in the Carter Doctrine, which Reagan has reiterated. "The U.S. is prepared to use any means necessary to prevent Soviet expansionism, including military force". Their spokespersons have spelled out very clearly the meaning of the statement. They mean that nuclear weapons "might" be necessary, and therefore might be used. We have nuclear weapons for that purpose; we have deployed them to the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf region for that purpose, and we are prepared to carry out the threat. If U.S. forces were endangered in that area (which they quickly would be if confronted by indigenous forces, let alone by Soviet ones), we would back up those forces with, for example, little neutron bombs, "discriminate" nuclear weapons. Should the Soviets reply in kind, it would be at the risk that the U.S. would escalate the conflict with more accurate weapons to the Soviet Union itself, using aircraft, cruise missiles, or perhaps a new extended range Pershing missile with its extreme accuracy and small "discriminate" warhead.

The likelihood that such a war could be kept limited is very small, close to negligible. Thus, the Europeans' problem is not that the war would be limited to their soil while the U.S. and Soviet Union would escape unharmed. Many Europeans realize this but they still object to the very thought that the U.S. might be tempted to believe it could limit such a war. It might use weapons from European soil, and thus escalate a war which would destroy everybody. This is a more realistic fear.

Whether or not U.S. officials really do believe that use of Pershing or cruise missiles could be limited, under both Presidents Reagan and Carter they have found themselves compelled to defend what they see as U.S. vital interests in the Middle East, by raising Soviet fears that we might escalate a war to that level. They rely so much on this fear that it is not enough just to make a verbal threat. They seek to enhance the credibility of such threats by designing and deploying weapons that seem to be, and are peculiarly designed as first strike disarming-type weapons.

The weapons they are demanding do have these first strike capabilities. Consider the Pershing and the MX. These weapons are far more accurate than any existing weapons on either side. The Soviets' most accurate weapon right now is not the SS-20, a relatively inaccurate intermediate range

This fact is almost never mentioned by government experts, who imply that the Soviets were the first to develop first strike weapons. In fact, the Soviets have done essentially nothing first. They tested long range ICBM's first, but they did not produce them or deploy them first. They did not test anything else first that I can think of. As usual, the U.S. is 3 - 5 years ahead technologically, in this crucial aspect of accuracy. The MX would get that accuracy down to 100 yards. The Pershing, a shorter range missile which would arrive sooner, would get it down to 30 yards (if it works), as would the cruise missile. In other words, a fair number of those missiles would score "holes in one". They would hit the silo, an extraordinary technical achievement.

The idea here is to increase our security against Soviet provocations, against their moving into the Middle East or anywhere else, by decreasing Soviet security - by threatening that under certain circumstances we would disarm them. Now, making the Soviet Union feel less secure is not a sure fire recipe for increasing our own security, especially when one looks a little further at the plans. The Pershing and the cruise missiles, like the MX, would be vulnerable. Not only would they be disarming weapons that would make Soviet weapons vulnerable, but they would themselves be vulnerable. There has never been any way to solve this problem for the MX.

President Reagan ran for office on the grounds that Minuteman silos were vulnerable to existing Soviet warheads. He now proposes to put more warheads in the same silos, 10 MX warheads for a single missile, whereas the Minuteman III has only three warheads. This would make the silo a more tempting, challenging target for the Soviet Union, without in any way making it less vulnerable. Worse than that, these 10 warheads will be more accurate than the Minuteman III, and larger in yield. They will be more threatening to the Soviet Union. On every score then, they put increased pressure on the Soviet Union to launch its missiles in a crisis before those warheads are destroyed by our Pershing and our MX. "Use 'em before you lose 'em", is

another phrase of these guys in the Pentagon, who, I think, do take very seriously the notion that when you have spent hundreds of billions of dollars on offensive capability and you are about to lose it, you should use it and see what happens. Maybe it will work, maybe it will do some good, maybe it will "limit damage". This is an attitude that I think can be expected on both sides.

Can it be that Reagan does not notice this or that his advisors do not notice? Let me spell out in one more way the problem I am raising. Reagan talked about a U.S. "window of vulnerability" in the early 1980's - that is, right now. He ran on that in 1980. He has been talking about it since 1977. What he was referring to was the accuracy of Soviet ICBM's that would be able to hit Minuteman silos. In the immense \$1.5 - 2.25 trillion planned military buildup he is not planning to spend a dime to reduce that U.S. "window of vulnerability". What he is exclusively doing is to widen the Soviet "window of vulnerability". He is trying to make Soviet missiles more vulnerable than they already are. That does not lessen U.S. vulnerability; it increases the threat to our land-based missiles.

To put MX's in Minuteman silos is to admit, as openly as can be admitted, a willingness or desire to pose a first strike threat - and only a first strike threat - with those weapons. If you want a first strike threat, then adopting more accurate missiles in the form of vulnerable missiles makes it more credible that in a crisis the U.S. will use those missiles, because they are subject to being lost and, "We cannot wait. If we wait we may lose them".

I think President Reagan and his advisors have noticed this advantage of vulnerability. It increases the supposed threat. It increases the likelihood of a nuclear war in a crisis, started by one side or the other. When both sides have these vulnerable first strike forces, each is under pressure in a crisis to go first. Clearly President Reagan is more concerned that the Soviets should have such a fear than that neither side should have such a fear. So he is actually prolonging an arms race in order for both sides to build these forces.

The fact is that both sides are now producing forces that have the characteristics I have described. The critique I have made of the MX also applies to the Soviet SS-18 and SS-19. So this type of strategic thinking may not be confined to the United States.

When I worry about nuclear weapons getting into the hands of many Third World countries, it is not because I expect those people to be crazier than the U.S. or Soviet

leaders, although they might be in an individual case. To be terribly dangerous with those weapons, they do not have to be crazier than any U.S. President has been. Almost no one seems to be aware of this, but the fact is that every President in his term of office (except possibly Ford) has had occasion to consider the imminent use of nuclear weapons against, in almost every case, an opponent that did not have nuclear weapons. This was probably less dangerous than doing it against the Soviet Union.' However, each of those opponents - the Koreans, the Indochinese, the Chinese - were allies or clients of the Soviet Union, so the problem remained of preventing Soviet retaliation.

Until the 1960's that was not so intense a problem as it might have been. The Soviet forces were enormously inferior to the U.S. The likelihood was that they would back down, as they did in Cuba, Berlin and in most of the other cases. What is meant by "inferior"? The experts who were designing the U.S. weapons, along with others, were predicting that we needed more weapons because the Soviets were about to have enormously more than we did. I believed that. I worked from 1959 - 1961 in the belief that I was heading off a Soviet surprise attack by deterring it, an attack which I believed was otherwise quite likely.

We now know the facts. In June 1961 (the year of the Berlin Crisis), the U.S. had about 2,000 intercontinental bombers that could reach the Soviet Union from the U.S., and about 1,000 forward-based bombers in range of Russia - that is, 3,000 bombers within range of Russia. The Soviets had 194 bombers that could reach the United States. That was the outcome of an earlier "gap", the "bomber gap" of the mid-1950's that was supposed to favour the Soviets. Also in June 1961, the official range of estimates was from 120 to 160 Soviet missiles. The Commander of the Strategic Air Command (SAC) estimated 1,000 Soviet ICBM's. The U.S. had about 40 Atlas and Titan ICBM's and 48 Polaris missiles at sea on three submarines, and about 120 intermediate range missiles in Turkey, England and Italy. So we had about 200 missiles in range of Russia.

What the Soviets actually had then, we learned in the fall of 1961, was four ICBM's on one site in Russia, Plesetsk - four missiles on one pad, liquid-fueled. They could not be kept fueled all the time, they were not "on alert". They could easily have been destroyed by a single American bomber with a non-nuclear weapon.

See examples below. For a fuller list, with references, see "A Call to Mutiny", Introduction to Protest and Survive, ed. Thompson and Smith, Monthly Review Press, 1982.

In July 1961, President John F. Kennedy warned Americans to get fallout shelters by the end of the year because nuclear war might erupt over Berlin. That was the last time until last year that there was a major church debate on the morality of nuclear war. Then, it focussed on the question of whether a Christian could consider it within "just war" doctrine to arm oneself with a machine gun against one's neighbors to keep them out of a fallout shelter, if the neighbors had not been provident enough to build their own. I think most churchmen, after some anguish, decided that this was justifiable for Christians. Moral issues associated with nuclear war then submerged for quite a while.

Had nuclear war erupted over Berlin in 1961, it would not have been initiated by the Soviet Union. President Kennedy, for whom I was then working on some of these issues, did not have to worry in the fall of 1961 that the Soviets would initiate a nuclear attack, with their 4 ICBM's. He was not talking about a Soviet first strike. Nor was he thinking about a U.S. first strike, in the sense of an all-out first strike during the initial stages of the confrontation. In fact, Kennedy's thinking then is a perfect model of what Reagan is talking about now in the Middle East.

The plan was for the U.S. to put in a military presence on the road to Berlin if access were interrupted. Berlin was like an island, surrounded by Soviet and East German armoured divisions. If U.S. troops had been sent in, we could not possibly have outnumbered those Warsaw Pact troops, any more than we could now do so in the Northern part of the Middle East. So our planning very definitely called (as it always has called) for backing up those troops, if they were surrounded and endangered, with at least tactical nuclear weapons to protect them.

Two points kept those threats from being as dangerous as they would be today. First, the Soviets had a much lower overall capability than the U.S. Second, nearly all of the capability they had was within range only of our allies, not of the United States itself. At that time, when they had only four ICBM's, the Soviets had 400-500 intermediate and medium range missiles, (SS-4's and SS-5's) within range of Europe. They could have used these, but only at the risk that the U.S. would then wipe them out totally. They could do hardly anything, striking second, to the United States.

Going back to 1953, President Eisenhower threatened the Chinese that he would use nuclear weapons if they did not meet his terms at Panmunjom in Korea. This was secret at the time, but it is described in his memoirs. Almost all

of the other threats I have described were secret at the time, except for Berlin and Cuba, but they have come to light now in memoirs and declassified documents. Eisenhower wrote that of course the Soviets couldn't have hit the U.S. at that time. He wasn't worried about that, had he been obliged to carry out his threat. But he was worried that the Russians might retaliate against Japan, which would be a special pity considering the Japan had earlier been hit by nuclear weapons. He wrote, "I was anguished over this possibility", although he was not anguished enough to withdraw the threat, or to tell the Japanese; but it was not likely that the threat would have to be carried out. President Eisenhower absolutely did not want a nuclear war, but, like today's leaders, he was prepared to make threats and to back up those threats with actions that might have to be carried out.

We have also protected Chinese nationalist troops a few miles off mainland China in the Taiwan Straits crisis in 1955, and again in 1958. In fact, we may have come closer then to using those weapons than at any other time. In 1958 President Eisenhower told the Joint Chiefs of Staff that they could plan on using nuclear weapons against Mainland China if the Chinese attempted to invade those little islands just off thier shores, or possibly even if they continued their blockade by artillery fire. The Chinese backed off - a success for the threats.

The point is not that such threats cannot work. They have worked; at least Presidents think they have worked, and they have reason to believe that. That is why they keep making them. The point is that the threats may not work and the likelihood of their working is decreasing, not increasing, in a world where the Soviet Union no longer has only four ICBM's. Thanks to Edward Teller's and the Livermore Laboratory's effective lobbying against the Comprehensive Test Ban, not only has the U.S. continued testing weapons, the Soviets have continued testing weapons, and now have 1,400 ICBM's. That is the cost of refusing to sign a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty twenty years ago.'

In the late 1960's we chose to pursue our technological lead by putting multiple warheads on a given missile. (MIRV - Multiple Independently-Targeted Re-entry Vehicles.) We were five years ahead of the Soviets, so we

Lawrence Livermore Laboratory in California is one of two sites, with Los Alamos, where all U.S. nuclear weapons have been designed. Both are "campuses" of the University of California.

excluded MIRV technology from the early SALT negotiations. We did not want to talk about avoiding it or putting a ban on flight testing. Result: we doubled our warheads between 1970-1975 by MIRVing Minuteman and Polaris missiles. Five years later, in 1975, the Soviets started doing the same. Now their 1,400 missiles have some 5,000 warheads. These are the very warheads creating the supposed current "window of vulnerability" - another cost of our refusal to propose a bilateral halt to testing, our ill-conceived strategy of seeking security via a continued arms race and American technological superiority.

There is no technological solution to the threat posed by these offensive weapons. No technical expert of any authority (unless Edward Teller) regards it as feasible to protect the populations of the Northern Hemisphere by any technical means, even twenty or forty years from now. It is feasible to do something to deflect warheads from hitting a particular missile silo, and to protect that missile silo to some extent. There are certain things you can do, but protecting cities is not one of them.

In proposing to acquire an ABM capability, President Reagan talks about the instability of the current situation. As he puts it rather vividly, "It is intolerable that the great nations of the world sit here like people facing themselves (sic) across a table, each with a cocked gun, and no one knowing whether someone might tighten the finger on the trigger". (New York Times, March 26th, 1983.)

It is an odd image, "people facing themselves", a distinct suggestion of Russian roulette. Where are the "guns" pointed? The truth is that it doesn't make much difference. These "guns" can be fired into the ozone layer, or into the Earth, or at this or that; the effects of an all out exchange are not going to vary enormously, in terms of the destruction of cities and industrial civilization in the Northern Hemisphere.

"Not knowing whether someone might tighten the finger on the trigger", the President says. Indeed, the Soviets have warned that if Pershings go into Europe, thus threatening their hardened command and control centres with accurate attack by missiles having only six minutes flight time - not enough time for any human to make a decision - they will automate their response and wire in their launch orders to the electronic warning, as the only way of getting that launching order out effectively before the arrival of the accurate short distance Pershing warheads.

Now I wish I could trust the Soviets not to go to launch-on-warning, and I hope they wouldn't do that. But I do not fully trust them to be so different from our

planners. Our Pentagon began talking about "launch-on-warning" the moment the Soviet accuracy increased on their SS-18's. We do have a launch-on-warning capability, although it is not turned on now. The intercontinental SS-18's confront us with a rather leisurely decision period of 28-30 minutes, instead of six minutes. If the Russians adopted "launch-on-warning", our security would then depend on the reliability of Soviet computer systems. We can only hope that they are a lot more reliable than ours, because a Senate study last year revealed that we had 147 false alarms in the preceding 18 months. Of these, four went several minutes (half the flight time of a Pershing missile) into an alert, with command and control planes actually taking off.

In other words the Russians have told us that they would, as we probably would in their place, start a roulette wheel spinning if Pershing missiles go into Germany, which we are promising to achieve by the end of 1983. Then we could all wait for the first big computer failure on the Soviet side, and that would be it.

That is where we are now; that is where President Reagan is proposing to push us with the Pershings.

President Reagan puts forward an anti-ballistic missile system as being somehow an answer to this human predicament of helplessness to prevent nuclear attack. (At best, it won't come soon enough to diminish the effects of a Soviet "false alarm", after they have adopted "launch-on-warning".) In fact, his plan, along with its unworkability, would raise the first strike ante. Any anti-ballistic missile system will work very much better if you strike first than if you are retaliating. I do not have to characterize the particular anti-ballistic missile system. There are dozens and dozens of proposals, but all of them would be swamped by large numbers of warheads coming at once, especially if those warheads were accompanied by coordinated barrages of decoys. The ballistic missile defence system cannot tell the difference. Moreover, all such systems depend on radars which are highly vulnerable to attack. They depend on satellite communications and on all kinds of other communications which would be totally disrupted if warheads began exploding in our territory.

Any possible anti-ballistic missile system would work enormously better under the following conditions. First, you are at a great advantage if you know when the enemy attack is coming, i.e. if you have just launched your own attack and theirs is retaliatory. Second, if you have greatly reduced the number of warheads on their side by destroying them on the ground or in port, you do not get this huge barrage coming at you. Third, by hitting their

communications and their satellites first, along with their silos, you assure that their retaliatory attack comes at you raggedly and perhaps without as many decoys; retaliatory missiles coming singly, or in sequential waves, can be handled much more easily by the ABM system.

No system is going to work well even under those conditions, because enough missiles will get through to destroy the cities. But in relative terms, you are going to knock down a much higher percentage of the incoming warheads.

So in other words, the anti-ballistic missile defence system (ABM) will mainly improve the first strike capability. It will reduce the damage an opponent can do to you if he strikes second, much more than it will reduce what he can do striking first. Thus it will increase the difference between striking first and striking second, the advantage of "pre-empting". That means that this "defence" system actually increases the pressure against waiting in a crisis when there is reason to fear the other side might use nuclear weapons against you.

To return to President's Reagan's image of people sitting across the table with their fingers tight on hair-triggers, his solution amounts to filing down the trigger mechanisms of those pistols, to make the hair trigger even more delicate. He wants to increase the instability of the system in a crisis. Why could he be doing this? Could it be wholly inadvertant? I do not believe that. I think President Reagan is doing this because he believes that the threat that we might strike first in such a crisis is simply indispensable to the United States.

NATO planning has always, from its beginning in 1949-1950, been based on the assumption that in facing any major Soviet non-nuclear attack, the U.S. would initiate nuclear war. It is interesting that very few people are aware of that.

Canada is in NATO. Canadians should know the nature of those plans. I am not talking about U.S. plans, but NATO plans, which is to say Canada's plans. Canada may or may not have been involved continuously in the detailed planning. That varies a bit within the Alliance, but you can be sure that your representatives and your officials do know what much of the public does not know. But they have not made the public aware that NATO planning is "first use" planning. Their hope, obviously, is to avoid a war. The desire is not to fight a limited nuclear war. The desire is to deter it, to deter not just the nuclear war but also a non-nuclear attack, however it might arise, as over Berlin. But they accept the strategy of doing so by deliberately

coupling the prospect of such a non-nuclear war to that of deliberate initiation of nuclear war by the U.S. and NATO.

To be sure it will not be a Canadian finger on the trigger, or a German, or a Dutch finger. It will be the American President's or his American representatives. The consequences will be brought upon Canada and everywhere else by a judgement made not by a Canadian. It will be a judgement made - if it is in fact made at a high level - by an American President for whom you have no opportunity to vote. It could be called "annihilation without representation", which may be somewhat worse, even, than taxation without representation.

Now I know that many early Canadians were United Empire Loyalists, who chose not to be disloyal to King George III. Consider the "oppressions" of George III, which seemed to my predecessors two hundred years ago to warrant a bloody revolution. It is worth thinking about just how heavy those oppressions, were compared with what occurs today rather routinely, including those inflicted by my own government on people in many parts of the Third World where our support is crucial to regimes like that in El Salvador. If revolution was justified in 1776 for such a presumption of monarchical authority over our tea and stamp tax, it is worth thinking whether Canadians knowingly, willingly, and conscientiously meant to delegate to the President of the United States, within the NATO alliance, the decision not just to retaliate to a nuclear attack, but in many circumstances to initiate nuclear war. And how should you regard your own government which countenances this?

In the NATO area, the chance that a nuclear war would remain limited is negligible. Outside the NATO area it might be limited, if nuclear weapons were used as in the past, against a non-nuclear country. It would be genocidal, but it might be unilateral genocide. It would not necessarily be mutually suicidal. However, it would almost surely involve a client or ally of the Soviet Union, and whether such wars would indefinitely remain limited, seems quite dubious.

What might be done about this situation? Is there another response, an alternative to President Reagan's anti-ballistic missile system? Consider the latest position of the Catholic Bishops. I notice that another of the FBI's findings is that the Soviet Union is attempting to establish contact with various church leaders. They have gotten out of touch over the years since 1917, and they are trying to reestablish contact with religious figures in the United States. Supposedly, the Soviets have collected biographical information on peace activists to see if they might "be vulnerable to recruitment". It will be

interesting to see how many Catholic Bishops they do recruit.

Well, the Catholics sound as though somebody has gotten to them all right. The Catholic Bishops, in a panel chaired by Archbishop Bernadin of Chicago, drafted a pastoral letter to the community of Catholics in the United States, on Church judgement with respect to the ethics of citizenship and of military strategy in the thermo-nuclear era. The final draft, published in May, 1983, says this: "The danger of escalation is so great, that it is an unacceptable moral risk to initiate nuclear war in any form". That may seem a very moderate statement, but let me put it in context. The report also says, as have Popes for some time, that it is absolutely against Catholic "just war" doctrine, under any circumstances, deliberately to target or destroy noncombatants. That means, to target cities is immoral.

"Limited nuclear war" planning evolved only after the Soviet Union acquired a functional parity, in the late 1960's, by having an assured retaliatory capability. I was familiar with the war plans for the Eisenhower era, and I wrote the official top secret guidelines for the U.S. general war plans in 1961 under President Kennedy. The plans that we had inherited from Eisenhower called for initiating nuclear war under a wide variety of circumstances, not only in Europe, but any time we were fighting the Soviets. In the event of such a war initiated by the United States, those plans called for hitting every city in Russia and China, whether or not China had been a party to the dispute that led to this. (We then still believed in a Sino-Soviet bloc; this was a little anachronistic in 1961, but the CIA had not fully caught up on that point.)

The Joint Chiefs of Staff estimated the effects of carrying out this plan, in response to a question that I drafted for President Kennedy to ask them. The Joint Chiefs predicted the deaths of about half a billion people: 325 million in the Soviet Union and China alone, plus those who would be killed by fallout in neutral countries bordering Russia, even if a single warhead did not land on their territory. It was calculated that in addition to the 325 million, the majority of the population of Finland, Austria, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Japan would be wiped out by fallout alone! This is another reason why I say that the thought that one can run away from nuclear war, simply by expelling nuclear weapons from your territory, is very illusory for those neutral countries. Moreover, there would have been Soviet retaliation against Europe, although very little against the U.S. in those days. The total "bill" then, would have been about 600 million people, the

equivalent of 100 German Holocausts. This was the American plan, for a war in which hostilities would presumably have been begun by others, but in which nuclear operations were begun by deliberate U.S. decision.

I mentioned earlier that I had questioned myself, "Am I in the right line of work?" perhaps a year earlier, prompted by that crazy Atlas rocket scheme. But this was an operational plan, for which the U.S. had the weapons in 1961. I have no suspicion that anyone wanted to see that plan carried out, but it was not just a paper plan. It was reflected in weapons that had been designed by Americans, built by Americans with American taxpayers' money. They were in place on a hair-trigger alert - a ten-minute alert which I saw exercised. It was a very exciting experience, even on film, to see those planes zip into the air within ten minutes of a randomly determined warning. Amazing military discipline was involved. The planes were manned, in other words, by Americans who were ready to end life in the Northern Hemisphere on ten minutes notice.

I have spent a lot of time since then asking myself, regarding U.S. leaders, "Who are these guys? What has this country, my country, become?" I knew the colonels who made these plans, I knew some of their bosses who had asked for them. How did they come to do this? We can speculate about their motives, or what they are like and so forth, but I think the important thing is to see the effect of their preparations. We are living with the results of their work. There are other Americans (and not only Americans) who are ready to implement such plans today. Such plans for all-out nuclear warfare - mass genocide - do exist today. Whether you know it or not, there are Canadian officials who, every year since Canada joined NATO in 1949, have ratified those plans in your name.

The impact of the cruise missile

Right now, those same people are ratifying the idea of testing cruise missiles in Canada. These are slower than the Pershing II, but their contribution to human "security" is to provide, for the first time, a long range strategic weapon so small that it can be concealed easily from the cameras of reconnaissance satellites. In other words, it is essentially a weapon against arms control. It is a weapon whose completed testing and deployment may doom the possibility of verifiable arms control, because it will become impossible to count the number of strategic weapons on both sides.

To allow your territory to be used for that testing is to be party to the development and introduction of weapons which, like the Pershing or the MX, will almost surely be

imitated by the Soviets. In fact, they may insist on achieving that capability, once we deploy those weapons. That means that a freeze, if available now, might well not be available two to three years from now, when that testing is completed.

That means if we do not stop that testing and deployment now, then what President Reagan might call the "window of opportunity" for getting a freeze, (which of course he does not see as an opportunity) may close. It may not last forever, if it is indeed open now. We can only know if there is a possibility now for a freeze by proposing it to the Soviets, which Reagan is not willing to do. Where does that leave us? The testing is going on. It must be stopped. The deployment must be stopped; it must be stopped under Reagan. Stopping the arms race

What happens now is absolutely critical. If we don't stop the cruise and Pershing deployment, President Reagan's successor, even if he is willing to propose a freeze, may well find the Soviets unwilling to accept one, unwilling to forego testing weapons comparable to our Pershing and cruise. That is my analysis. A lot of Nuclear Freeze activists don't like me to say this, because it sounds too fatalistic, too pessimistic. It does sound like an "impossible dream" to stop these weapons under Reagan.

Yet there is a way to do it. I do not think Reagan is more committed to continuing the arms race than were Presidents Nixon or Ford to continuing the bombing of North Vietnam. They were not allowed to do that. The money was taken away from them by a quirk of the Constitution that followed our separation from George III in the States - the ability of Congress to control the money. The Constitution was used in a way that no Congress had ever done before, to take away from a President the money for combat operations in the midst of a war. It required eight to ten years of anti-war activity to bring Congress to that point, and it took luck of various kinds, even a sort of cooperation from President Nixon, thanks to Watergate. But the bombing ultimately was ended. Nixon blames the American public for taking the war away from him, for not allowing him to win it his way: with greater bombing and possibly with nuclear weapons. He believes that "they", we the public, ended the war. He is right. The Vietnamese, for all their unparalleled courage and determination, could not stop U.S. bombers from flying from Guam or from aircraft carriers. Only the U.S. people could do that, and they did. We did that.

A lot of people recognize what really did happen in the United States during that period, and how critical it was. We need to accept the responsibility of our power, and

acknowledge that we can and must do it again. Not without luck, not without a lot of effort and a lot of sacrifice, but we cannot say that it is impossible to stop this arms race under President Reagan.

There is a way to do it. It requires bringing pressure to bear on Congress to withhold the money for new weapons testing and for new deployments. In every possible non-violent organized way, we must slow and stop that test program to keep open the possibility for a mutual verifiable freeze, if and when an American President is willing to discuss that.

At that point we will find out if the Soviets are willing to end the arms race. If they are not, the arms race will continue. No American peace movement could bring about a unilateral halt in the U.S. for any prolonged period while the Soviet Union proceeded to add new weapons. So if offered a freeze, the Soviets would then have a choice. They could continue to participate in a two-sided arms race, or they could end it and reduce their arsenal, along with ours. They have never been offered that choice; they have never been tested on their willingness to do it. They say they are willing, but they have never been tested.

They probably won't be tested, I believe, until we get a new President. But if we delay on these other actions until then, I am not at all sure that the Soviets will be as willing then to halt the arms race, even though I believe they should. I do not trust them to be that wise, to be that different in their behaviour from how our Pentagon would behave in their place. So the arms race would go on. I don't think we can survive this "cocked pistol" situation indefinitely, for the very reasons Reagan suggests: the hair trigger aspect, the willingness to threaten on more than one side, and the increased likelihood that the threats will have to be carried out. The importance of Canada's opinion

That places Canada in a rather critical position along with the anti-war movement in the United States and Germany. I am counting on the Germans, not just the Green Party with its 5% of the vote, but a large fraction of that 60-70% of the German people who are opposed to the introduction of Pershing and cruise missiles. They come from all parties, including Chancellor Kohl's Christian Democratic Party. I am counting on them to bring the pressure to bear to keep those Pershing and cruise missiles out of their territory, while we do what we can in the U.S. to slow and stop the testing. I can say the same thing here. I was very heartened to learn how large and active the anti-nuclear movement has been in British Columbia, including the 35,000 people who walked for peace in

Vancouver last year.¹

Every indication to the United States that our allies are not enthusiastically supporting the introduction of these dangerous, destabilizing weapons, that on the contrary, the assent of allied governments in NATO is happening against the wishes of the majority of their people, conveys a message to the American people. In turn it is felt in Congress. This is very important.

It is obvious from what I have said that lobbying and letter writing to Congress are absolutely essential. This applies not only to Americans, but also to Canadians. Congressmen listen not only to mail from their own local constituents. In a broader sense, you are among their constituents. They are making decisions that directly affect your survival, and your children's possibility of survival. You have a right and an obligation to let them know how you feel as a member of that constituency, and they will hear that. The same applies of course to your own representatives. So, I believe in all those political measures, and also in non-violent civil disobedience. I have been particularly drawn to the Green Party, a party that has overthrown the old social democratic credo that if you are going into Parliament you have got to give up militancy, you have got to give up strikes, boycotts, demonstrations, actions in the streets. The Greens do both, and I think that is right.

Recently civil disobedience was effectively used by the many people who sat on the railroad tracks in front of the "white train" travelling slowly across the United States in March 1983, apparently carrying nuclear warheads for the Trident submarines in Bangor.

People were arrested when they tried to put their bodies between the train and its destination. This happened at many places along the route. I have a pretty good idea of what that feels like. In 1978, hundreds of us put our bodies on the tracks at Rocky Flats, outside Denver, where the triggers for all our thermo-nuclear weapons are made.

What defines our current human predicament is not merely the possibility of destruction of the kind that was visited upon Hiroshima or Nagasaki. Non-nuclear bombing with napalm, white phosphorus, magnesium bombs, killed more people in Tokyo in one day, March 5th 1945, than died in both Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Our civilian leaders in 1945

have told us they did not see "a moral problem", and did not lose a night's sleep, over dropping the bomb on Hiroshima or Nagasaki, because they knew the U.S. was already killing more people than that in its daily operations. But Hiroshima and Nagasaki were obliterated by atom bombs (A-bombs, fission bombs).

The "triggers" made at Rocky Flats, Colorado are the plutonium components for thermonuclear weapons, (H-bombs, fusion bombs). Most people now do not really know the difference between the A-bomb and the H-bomb. All of our strategic weapons, and most of our tactical weapons, are H-bombs. Our 10,000 strategic warheads, and the 9,000 Soviet strategic warheads, are all thermo-nuclear, or H-bombs. Every one of those warheads requires a Nagasaki-type bomb as its trigger. The detonators that Rocky Flats makes are the fissionable components of Nagasaki bombs. They are used to detonate fusion bombs, whose power can be a thousand times greater or more. That is what defines our situation now.

Some Germans have defended Germany's reliance on a first use strategy, a strategy of threatening to initiate nuclear war, by saying, "You Americans do not understand what World War II was like. You were not bombed". That is true, of course. "For us", they continue, "World War II re-fought with non-nuclear weapons of the modern sort would be just as bad as World War III fought with nuclear weapons." I have heard those exact words from high level "experts" in Germany. It is an almost psychotic divorce from the realities of the present situation. They are living back in the early atomic age.

Some of them refer to a paper exercise that was "fought" in 1955 code-named Carte Blanche. The results were released and showed that perhaps one to two million Germans would die from our own weapons if we used nuclear weapons in our attacks. That shocked the Germans. That is what they think of as nuclear war. But the weapons "used" in that exercise in 1955 were fission weapons. They would now correspond to the triggers for our modern thermonuclear weapons! Germans are no longer risking 2 million dead, they are not risking the 3 million dead they lost in their army during their aggressive war, or their half a million people lost to civilian bombing. They are risking essentially the entire German population. Germany would be one vast smoking hole, just from the medium range Soviet weapons alone. The same is true here. We are living in a thermonuclear world.

The situation is vastly worse, actually, than Hiroshima can possibly suggest.

When we demonstrated at Rocky Flats in 1978, we were

¹ Editor's note: Ellsberg spoke four weeks before 100,000 Vancouverites walked for peace on April 23, 1983.

alarmed about neutron bombs, which were about to be made. These are small thermonuclear bombs, "discriminate" bombs, just the kind that Teller has been pushing on us for twenty years, bombs that seem usable because they are so discriminate. President Reagan decided on August 8th 1981, to produce the neutron bomb. I am afraid that this is the match that could detonate a nuclear war, just as an atom bomb is needed to detonate an H-bomb. This is the most likely candidate for deliberate first use.

The neutron bomb is the useable bomb, the bomb that can be exploded close enough to your own troops, and is precise enough in its effects, that it tempts its possessor to use it. The Russians are now building it, the French are getting it, the Israelis are suspected of testing it near South Africa. Here is a bomb that seems to offer a way to defend your troops if they are surrounded, as so many troops have been surrounded in the last thirty years.

It felt so urgent in 1978 that we sat on the tracks at Rocky Flats to block the trains carrying out nuclear wastes. Without shipping that waste away from the workers, within several weeks production at Rocky Flats nuclear weapons plant would have to cease. Without the product of that single plant - the only facility that makes plutonium components for all U.S. fission and thermonuclear fusion weapons - no new nuclear weapons could be added to the U.S. stockpile.

The first time we saw a train approach, I realized that we had never discussed what to do when the train actually arrived. There was a guy who shared my tent, a fairly short guy with long red hair, who ran down the little ravine before anyone else. He moved as gracefully as though he had rehearsed it, put his head on one track and his feet on the other, and lay down across the track. We all got behind him and put our American flag up, and we watched the train coming at us through thirty-six inches of snow. The train was coming quite slowly. We felt sure that they didn't want to run us over. That was not our image of who those guys were. But we did ask ourselves, at least I know I asked myself, "Have they practised stopping? Could they be interested in a little game of chicken here?" The train did stop, about fifteen feet from us.

At other arrests, the officers had blown whistles and shouted through bullhorns, "You have ten minutes or you will be arrested". In this case nothing happened. We looked at the train, the train looked at us. Then silently two files of policeman came out of the train through the snow towards us. It looked as though I had seen this before, although that seemed improbable, until suddenly I realized it was like the scene in the movie, "Butch Cassidy and the

Sundance Kid", where the super posse comes out of the train on their horses. It turned out that the policemen inside the train also had been saying to each other, "This is just like Butch Cassidy!" So we shared this cultural matrix, and we shared something else with those policemen. It turned out they lived in the area, they knew it was being contaminated with radioactivity, and they thought we were doing a pretty good thing. They were very friendly. The first night we spent in jail, several of them kept asking for our arm bands and buttons, late at night when there would be only one guy on duty and nobody else was watching them. They would say, "My wife wants one", "I've got a little kid". It was sort of like autograph hunting. So the next time, I suggested that we go into jail with a pocketful of these trinkets to give out to the jailers.

They are all at risk, and they become aware of it. President Reagan's at risk, Reagan's children are at risk, Chairman Andropov's family is at risk. They are all hostage to each other's actions and they are not doing what is required of them to protect their children. So we have to do it, and we cannot protect our children without protecting theirs. We have got to do it all together. It is the only way that this thing can be stopped.

The sitting on tracks at Bangor, Washington, happening right now, deserves some reflection by you. As somebody who has done it, I can say that the purpose of doing it is to put the question in your minds: "What could I do to help end the arms race if I were willing, like those people, to take a risk?" Going to jail is a pretty big risk. What you are called upon to do generally will not involve jail. But it will involve risks.

It can be done without violence, in fact it has to be done without violence. As one woman in our Rocky Flats group said, "You cannot fight plutonium with violence. That only spreads it around". That is true in every sense. Violence can only confirm the values that we are opposing and trying to transcend. We can succeed without violence; but not without courage, not without a willingness to risk reputations, relationships, careers.

So, how does one put that question in people's minds? I would not have thought of taking an action that exposed me to 115 years in jail, putting out the Pentagon papers, without the example of Randy Kehler. He is now coordinating the mutual verifiable freeze effort, lobbying, referendums, petitions, and campaigns. But he spent two years in federal prison for draft resistance in order to put the question in my mind and other people's minds, "What could I do if I were willing to go to jail?" I thought of something and did it as would many people who asked themselves that question.

It is a very subversive question, subversive of one's current life. I think it is a very useful question. I am very glad the film "Gandhi" is being seen. I think the actions like this peaceful blockade of the railroad tracks are in the Gandhian spirit. They are part of what is needed.

These people sitting on the tracks, who say they want to stop the nuclear weapons trains, know the answer to the question that a judge put to me and my son when we were arrested together on the birthday of my youngest son, who was then one year old. The judge said "Why do you keep on doing this? You are not stopping anything. The trains always get through!" And we said, "Not without arrests, anymore. Not invisibly anymore. Not with the appearance of consent. Not smoothly, without anybody seeming to question them."

When my son and I were being taken from the arrest point on the tracks to the jail, we were driven along the tracks, handcuffed together. My son was looking at the tracks and he said, "There should have been Germans on the tracks at Auschwitz". There were not, apparently, and of course they would have been killed. But some Germans should have done that or something like that, even if they did get killed. There should be people on the tracks at Rocky Flats from now on. As my son said in court as he was being sentenced, "When I heard that there were people in Colorado who were willing to act on this, I wanted to be here. Rocky Flats is the Auschwitz of our times."

Two million Jews were killed at Auschwitz. Each warhead of one megaton or greater, on either side, would kill two million people if you dropped it near two million people. Each one of those warheads is an Auschwitz. It is time for us to ask ourselves, what should the Jews of Germany have done? I raised this question in Germany just a few weeks ago at a Nuremberg Tribunal against first strike weapons. We must ask this, not to criticize what the Jews did do, or to condemn it, or to judge it in any way, but to learn from it. What would they want us to know from their experience as to what we should be doing now? Because, faced with the catastrophe that our societies and our leaders are preparing for us, we are all Jews now.

And what should the Germans have done? Because those of us - especially citizens with governments which are to some degree accountable and open to us - are accomplices, to the extent that we do not raise our voices, that we do not put ourselves in the way of their action. What would the Germans tell us that they should have done in the 1930's? We had better learn that, we had better listen to those voices, because as participants in this process we

are all Germans now.

My son said, "These weapons should no longer be made in the United States or anywhere else, without Americans having to be arrested for it." That applies to Canada and the other NATO countries, and that is the task up to us. Fortunately, you do not have to have the heroism of a Sakharov, or Batovrin or the other people in the Soviet Union who are in fact risking imprisonment and death to protest these things. We do have much greater freedom than those people. We have a lot of influence, and it gives us a responsibility: to use our voices, to use our bodies against this machine and to save all these children, ours, theirs, everybody's. We can do that and we must do that!

QUESTION PERIOD:

QUESTION:

What will the U.S. do if Canada refuses to test the cruise missile?

DR. ELLSBERG:

Well, I do not know their contingency plans for this operation. This question comes up often in Germany. What really will happen to us if we do not accept the cruise and Pershing? It is a perfectly serious question. Those people who believe that relations with the U.S. are improved by offering your territory to test the cruise are probably not entirely wrong. There are dimensions in which relations would be worsened by refusing to test the cruise. There could be economic consequences, as far as the Reagan Administration is concerned.

I would say this, however. You are not alone in this process. Indeed, the kinds of sanctions and the kinds of pressures that might be used to whip an ally into line are not, I hope, going to be freely available to President Reagan or to any of his successors. Certainly the American movement will do what we can to keep any ally from being punished. What can we do? It is a pretty big movement. It had better get powerful, it had better begin to acquire a power that is in some ways proportionate to its

numbers. That is beginning to happen.

That is some protection to Canada or to the German people as well. In Germany, for example, the American Administration is beginning to understand that the opposition they are getting from their Allied governments reflects the fact that those governments are afraid of losing power if they go along with what Reagan wants. Reagan can understand that. Politicians have some sympathy for each other in a position like that. So if you create that kind of pressure on your government - and this policy won't change unless you do - I think even President Reagan will not hold Trudeau totally responsible for that action. He will understand that it is the "irresponsible public" that has forced Canada to do this.

QUESTION:

Can a freeze on cruise missile production and deployment be mutually verified?

DR. ELLSBERG:

That is hard to answer. I have heard different answers, and it may be a real problem to do it. This is true of the cruise missile in particular. The initial deployment is not such a big problem. It is almost certain that they will be deployed initially with so much command and control apparatus, guards, and other necessary arrangements that the initial deployment and their regular basing will be quite verifiable. But at a later stage, when there are really large numbers of these things, significant numbers could be concealed. So we then would have a weapon that may not be compatible with the freeze or with any overall reductions.

The Trident is an entirely different matter, especially the Trident II. Not only the submarine but the missiles are large enough so that their transport and installation can be monitored very effectively. They do not pose that problem at all, nor does the Pershing.

Non-verifiability is a problem peculiar to the cruise in that respect.

There is also a problem with cruise testing, which puts all the more importance on holding off that process or not encouraging both sides to commit themselves to cruise missiles. Apparently it is hard to monitor testing, to distinguish a cruise from a light plane, or to distinguish a short range missile test from a long range one. That is not true with the Pershing or the other weapons. A testing ban on all ballistic missiles could be monitored at this time, whereas the cruise would offer real problems.

Note that we are a number of years ahead of the Soviets, both in propulsion and in accuracy on the long range cruise missile. Of course the accuracy is essential to make it effective. So the problem of verification affects the U.S. in the short run. If the U.S. could hold off on this weapon until the entire arms race regime is changed, then we would have the chance of getting it under control, including perhaps on-site inspection if that were needed.

A last thought on verification. The Soviets have over the years indicated that they were willing to see some on-site inspection, even a fair amount of it, in conjunction with major measures of disarmament. I think very few Americans have heard that. During the Comprehensive Test Ban negotiations conducted under President Carter, the Soviets had accepted, in principle, a sizable number of on-site inspections of suspicious events. These negotiations were turned off by Reagan, on the grounds that you could not verify the testing. That is a hoax. The testing of nuclear warheads, by all current scientific accounts, can be very adequately verified. For some of the production measures, on-site inspection would be desirable, and might be necessary. Whether the Soviets are willing to do that remains to be seen. We won't know until the President is willing

to propose that to the Soviets. You will hear from many people, "Of course the Russians won't accept that". But we will not find out unless we are willing to ask them. No president has been willing to propose a cut off of the arms race to the Soviet Union. No President has ever confronted the Soviet Union with the option of stopping the arms race, as opposed to continuing. So we really do not know. Obviously, it is essential that they be given that choice, that challenge. So if on-site inspection is required for control of new missile testing, there is reason to hope that the Soviets will allow that in the context of a comprehensive major agreement.

QUESTION:

How did the German people respond, as to what they felt should have been done, or should now be done?

DR. ELLSBERG:

Their response was very sober and serious. I did not know what the response would be. I did not know how much the younger people knew of Hitler. I am told that many of them actually do not know a lot about Hitler. But one reason that many people are now in the movement against nuclear weapons in Germany, they will tell you, is precisely because they felt that they and their parents or their colleagues did not do enough, did not do what they should have done, as Germans. This is especially true of the church people. Many of them feel guilty and ashamed of the relative inactivity of the churches at that time. They did learn from it. They are now acting on what they learned.

At the recent Nuremburg Tribunal, I said that these weapons have been planned to constitute an Auschwitz per weapon in the sense described previously. Of course, it is hoped that they will not be used. Nevertheless they are each an Auschwitz which has a sign on it saying "to be used only in the event of war". If that machinery were turned on, whoever started it first, the result would be

"die Entlosung der Menschheits frage" - the final solution to the human problem.

I expected that to have a good deal of resonance in Germany. The response was twofold. The immediate answer was very strong applause. They were standing afterwards, and the Nuremberg papers actually headlined that comment. The more significant "response" is that the anti-war movement in Germany and in Europe as a whole is calling for massive demonstrations, electoral activity and civil disobedience to oppose the Pershing and cruise missile installation, whatever Chancellor Kohl eventually decides to do. Their answer is that they have learned from the last forty years that these missiles should not go into Germany without Germans first having to be arrested for non-violent disobedience.

QUESTION:

What do you propose we do, mass revolt or elect politicians who are pro-disarmament to high positions?

DR. ELLSBERG:

The latter may require a sort of "mass revolt!" In the United States, to change our Senate and our Administration from policies that every Administration, Democratic and Republican, has endorsed for the last 35 years is not going to be a small change. It is not some mild reform, it is a major revolt. The change by the Catholic Church and other churches alters the odds quite significantly in a positive direction. It is an enormous change. I think it is like a revolution, and will be felt as such when the Catholic Bishops' statement is published. Consider what the Bishops are saying: "A nuclear war should not be initiated in any form We feel the moral responsibility of beginning nuclear war is not justified by rational political objectives." What they are saying is that even for the oil of the Middle East, even for Berlin, one cannot justify it. The issue is, for what goal would you initiate a process likely to destroy organized life in the Northern

Hemisphere? The Catholic Bishops are saying very simply, "You have no right to do that for anything. There is nothing that justifies that."

This means that NATO plans, then, are morally unjustified. The line I was about to quote from the Bishops is this: "No Catholic may on pain of mortal sin, participate in the planning or implementation of attacks on civilian targets", nor in the initiation of nuclear war. Now that is telling Catholic officers that they may not plan or carry out orders which are in fact written down in their current orders in NATO planning. This applies to Canadian officers right now as well. It is a call to mutiny, it is a call for the disobedience demanded by the Nuremberg principles. It identifies orders by a secular authority which may not be obeyed. That is a kind of moral revolution for the Catholic Church. My interpretation of that is that if the Catholic Church in my country can change that much, that fast on this issue, ... then we can, anybody can. It is possible.

QUESTION: Has NATO outlived it's usefulness?

DR. ELLSBERG:

NATO has to a large extent consisted of the U.S. commitment and preparation to initiate nuclear war. One can argue that it need not be that way, or that the first use doctrine can be changed. But so long as this remains its basic nature - an American guarantee of blowing up the world if Russian troops cross the border of East/West Germany - then certainly one can think of other arrangements in the world that might be less dangerous. I think it is a good time to be reconsidering what these alliances are for, and what they actually achieve. Most people living in NATO countries are not even aware of the Alliance's fundamental nuclear weapons policy and the weapons designed to implement it. That is the state of affairs throughout NATO, or has been until this year. People are

beginning to learn about this issue in a way which permits them to be responsible citizens.

Perhaps we need to look at all of these alliances anew, as did the American colonists two hundred years ago, forming what they saw as a New World. Now is a good time to be constitution building in the way the Americans did during the mid-Eighteenth Century, to be thinking about how we ought to compact, and with whom our alliances should be; how people should be represented and how policies should be made. The current way is intolerable because it is leading fast towards the extinction of life on earth. We cannot give the benefit of the doubt, as humans usually have done throughout history, to the status quo. This time we can see all too clearly - at least those of us who look hard at the problem - where events are leading. So everything should be up for a new look - NATO especially, unless NATO can change.

While Canada is in NATO, it certainly has the right and the capability, and I would say the obligation, to represent its public in questioning the current policies which you are asked to accept. If as Canadians you do not consider it wise to base the defence of anybody upon a readiness and willingness to blow up the Northern Hemisphere, then I think you should be asking yourselves what you are going to do about that.

Getting out of NATO would be only one possibility and not the first thing to think about. I would think working within NATO to raise these questions - as Greece's new Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou is doing, or the Dutch are beginning to do - would be very educational, worthwhile, and the minimum you should ask of your own leaders. They must begin to reflect your own values in their representations on behalf of Canada within NATO. Surely they cannot go along with these current plans.

QUESTION:

Have you changed your views on nuclear weapons since you stopped working for the U.S. Government?

DR. ELLSBERG:

I have not changed my views on nuclear weapons. They are essentially the same as when I was in the government twenty years ago, working on war plans. That has some significant implications. It was true then, and remains so, that many people in the government would agree with most of what I have said, for example, about no first use policy. In 1959-1961, I was fooled into thinking that the major risk of nuclear war was a Soviet surprise attack with the enormous number of missiles they were supposedly about to have. As it turned out, they did not have those missiles. I was worrying about a false problem, but that was enough to make me work on war plans which I thought were retaliatory.

From that I infer that there are many people in the Canadian Government, the German Government, in the U.S. Government and in the Russian Government who are blinded to the first strike implications of plans that they personally may never have seen, or of weapons which they think of as retaliatory weapons. These people manage to justify or legitimize what they are doing in terms of retaliation and

"deterrence".

Obviously there are many people in government who are not specialists in weapons technology, as I was. They are capable of being fooled by what President Reagan says about the balance of power and the possibility that the Soviets are on the verge of superiority. Almost no official can be found to support the President in his statements that the Soviets are now superior. But many of them, no dumber than I was, can be led to believe that the Soviets might be on the verge on some kind of superiority. That is as false today as it was twenty years ago. Many government officials don't know that. The hopeful aspect of this interpretation is that since their behaviour depends on ignorance, it can be changed. At least the ignorance can be changed.

But there is one further hurdle. By 1968, after the Tet Offensive, almost nobody in the U.S. Government any longer believed that the U.S. could win the Vietnam War. It was clear to most that a hopeless stalemate would continue until finally we had to depart, leaving the Vietnamese in command. The government had lost faith in the war. Even the ones who were basically hawkish, quite prepared to

Editor's note: see for example Prime Minister Trudeau's "open letter to Canadians" of May 9, 1983, which implies that cruise and Pershing missiles are either retaliatory or defensive:

"...But I also know that the Soviets are very heavily armed.

"In these circumstances, it would be almost suicidal for the West to adopt a policy of unilateral disarmament, or a policy of suffocating the development of new means of defending ourselves against the Soviet SS-20's".

Admiral Carroll's response to a question makes clear that there is no such thing as a "defensive" nuclear missile. Table 3 of Dean Pentz' essay details the qualitative differences between SS-20 and the new NATO missiles, which Trudeau does not appear to understand.

do such a thing elsewhere, wanted to cut losses in Vietnam. But the President did not agree, and the war went on. From then on, it was fought essentially by people who did not believe in it. Yet it continued for seven more years, during which the U.S. dropped two World War II's worth of explosives on Vietnam. Four million tons of bombs were dropped on Vietnam by people who no longer believed that what they were doing would win anything!

That shows that changing people's consciousness of policy is not quite enough. The change that took place in me was to discover a new way of acting on what I already believed. It involved coming to see that my highest contribution to my country might not be defined by acting unquestioningly, loyally and obediently to my boss, or even to the President. I began to realize that I really had to disobey their wishes on this, and act on a broader loyalty to the Constitution and to our people, to our values, and to human beings, including the humans on both sides who were getting killed in Vietnam. I had to discover a way of doing that.

I did usefully discover such a way, precisely by the face-to-face example of people who were going to jail to put that question in my mind. The change then that took place in me was a change brought about by this contagion of example. It was not a change in what I believed, but in what I did about my beliefs, in whom I spoke to, whom I worked with. It was a move outside the Executive Branch, which like most people in that system, I had thought of as the world, the only place there was air to breathe. I had to discover that there was life outside the Executive Branch.

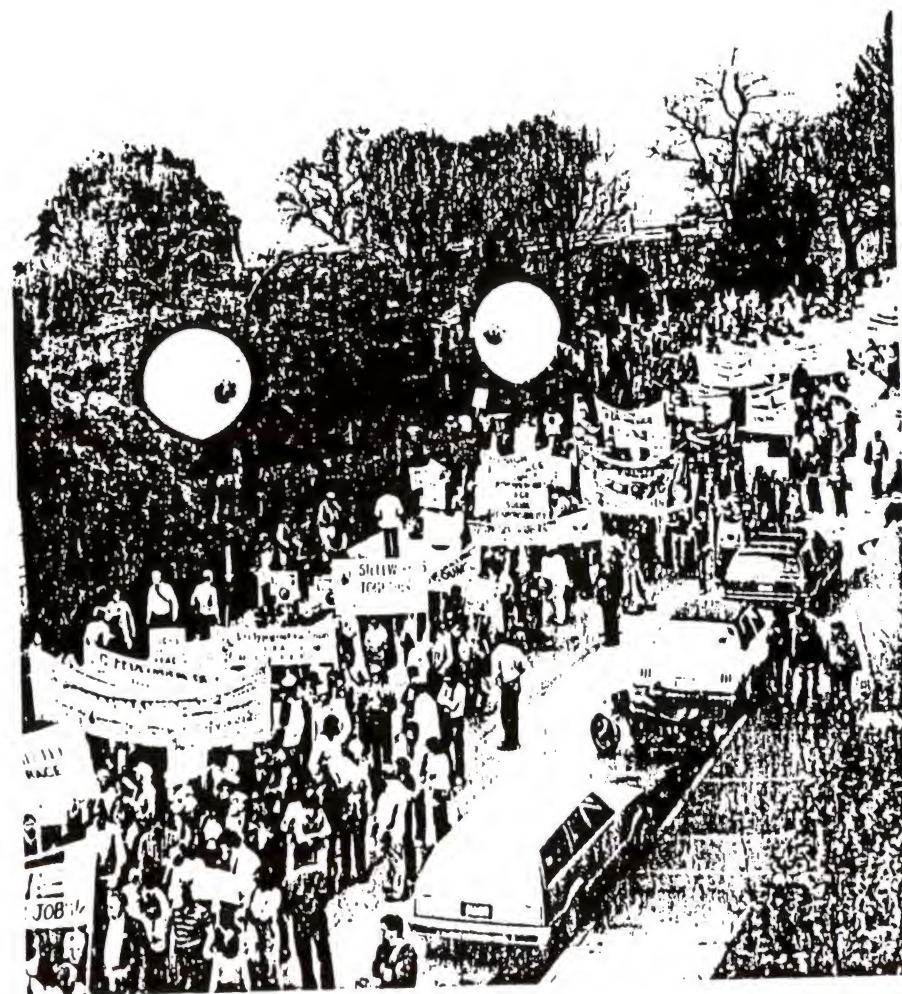
It was people like yourselves who showed me that possibility. I now take part in civil disobedience actions because I know that every person who does so has the potential to disseminate that invention, that discovery of how

profoundly one can influence other people, helping them to find a kind of power and freedom that they simply had not imagined before. It was a delight for me to come up to Canada and find a newspaper with a description of Jim and Shelley Douglas of Bangor,¹ and a photograph of those people on the tracks, because I know the potential power of such examples. I felt that power on my own life. I know it changed me and it can help free other people too.

¹ Editor's note: founders of the Pacific Life Community, a group of Canadian and American non-violent activists who have maintained a protest camp outside the Trident submarine base at Bangor, Washington.



Rocky Flats, Colorado. Reminiscent of the super posse in "Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid", police emerge from a train to arrest demonstrators blockading the nuclear weapons manufacturing plant. (photo: Joe Daniel)



Trade unions and community groups at the Vancouver Walk for Peace, April 23, 1983. This was only one of the many feeders to the main body of the Walk, which police estimated at over 100,000 people. (photo: T.L. Perry Jr.)